REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are pending in the application. In the Office Action dated August 24, 2005, the Examiner objected to claim 1 due to an informality. Additionally, claims 1, 3-6, 11, and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,631,481 ("Hoard") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,694,098 ("Warbrick"). Further, claims 21-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,646,997 ("Barton"). In this Amendment, claims 1 and 11 have been amended and claims 21-31 have been cancelled. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in light of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

I.   Claim 1

The Examiner objected to claim 1 due to an informality. Claim 1 has been amended to remove the informality. Applications respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claim 1.

II.   The Proposed Combination of Hoard and Warbrick Does Not Render the Current Independent Claims Unpatentable

Amended independent Claims 1 and 11 are directed to a method and system to manipulate in-transit digital signals riding on an optical link. Generally, an optical stream is split into a primary and a secondary optical stream. The secondary optical stream is converted to an electrical signal and a clock signal and a data signal are identified from the electrical signal. A selection is received from a user indicating at least a particular portion of the optical stream to be modified. The particular portion of the primary optical stream is identified based on at least the clock signal, the data signal, and the received selection from the user. The primary optical signal is delayed and the particular portion of the primary optical stream is modified. Neither Hoard or Warbrick disclose *receiving a selection from a user indicating at least a portion of the optical stream to be modified* as recited in independent claims 1 and 11.

Hoard is directed to a method for injecting amplitude or frequency distortion into a waveform sent over a data link in response to detecting a control event in the

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waveform. Generally, Hoard discloses that a control event may comprise one or more conditions of a waveform that must be satisfied before an error is injected into the waveform. Therefore, in the Hoard system, an error is injected in the waveform in response to various conditions existing in the waveform itself. Hoard does not disclose **receiving a selection from a user indicating at least a particular portion of the optical stream to be modified** and modifying the particular portion of an optical stream **based on the received selection from the user** as recited in independent claims 1 and 11. In other words, in Hoard, an error is injected in a waveform based on conditions of the waveform itself where in independent claims 1 and 11, a particular portion of the optical stream is modified based on a received selection from a user indicating a particular portion of the optical stream to be modified. Like Hoard, Warbrick also fails to disclose or suggest **receiving a selection from a user indicating at least a particular portion of the optical stream to be modified** and modifying the particular portion of an optical stream **based on the received selection from the user**.

Warbrick is directed to an apparatus and method for reading and updating a packet header of an optical packet for transmission over an optical network. Generally, in Warbrick, only the packet header is modified and the modification of the packet header is not performed in response to any selection received from a user.

Due to the fact neither Hoard or Warbrick disclose or suggest receiving a selection from a user indicating at least a particular portion of the optical stream to be modified and modifying the particular portion of an optical stream based on the received selection from the user, any combination of Hoard and Warbrick necessary cannot render independent claims 1 and 11, or any of their dependent claims unpatentable. Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection to the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the proposed combination of Hoard and Warbrick.

III. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicant submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration is therefore respectfully requested. If there are any questions concerning this Response, the Examiner is asked to phone the undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4200.

Respectfully submitted,
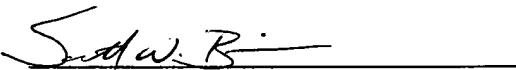
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